

WellBeing International

WBI Studies Repository

Spring 2004

NERO Spring 2004

Follow this and additional works at: <https://www.wellbeingintlstudiesrepository.org/newengrn>

Recommended Citation

"NERO Spring 2004" (2004). *New England Regional Office*. 7.
<https://www.wellbeingintlstudiesrepository.org/newengrn/7>

This material is brought to you for free and open access by WellBeing International. It has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of the WBI Studies Repository. For more information, please contact wbisr-info@wellbeingintl.org.



Responding to Rover

Hurricane Rover made landfall in Woods Hole, Massachusetts, on October 20, 2003, and NERO was there to respond to the forced evacuation of the local animal shelter and several hundred pet owners. You could call Rover a category 0 storm, since it wasn't a real hurricane. But the mock disaster simulation gave participants the chance to test their newly gained skills in animal disaster preparedness and response as part of the first national disaster animal response training presented in New England by The HSUS, in cooperation with the Cape Animal Care Project at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution.

More than 60 participants from throughout New England and beyond attended this intensive three-day course, which was designed to familiarize them with the information and experience needed to become effective disaster responders. Participants—including veterinarians, pet sitters, animal shelter personnel, and many others—faced the daunting task of setting up an emergency animal shelter for the storm's animal "victims," and responding to a variety of emergency scenarios presented to them.

"NERO was very excited about participating in coordinating this one-of-a-kind training conference," said NERO Director

continued on page 2

Simulation participants examine a canine "victim" of Hurricane Rover.



Bear Referendum Qualifies for Maine Ballot

Since the launch of the HSUS-supported ballot initiative to ban the baiting, hounding, and trapping of Maine's black bears, the campaign has steadily gained momentum. Approximately 50,000 registered Maine voters needed to sign the initiative by late autumn to qualify this measure for the November 2004 ballot. In a stunning effort, the all-volunteer signature drive yielded more than 100,000 signatures, breaking all previous records in the state!

Supporters collected signatures throughout the fall, but the effect of the campaign's wide-scale mobilization wasn't fully evident until Election Day, when close to 500 volunteers turned out to gather signatures at polling locations throughout the state. NERO Program Coordinator Hillary Twining, who spent the day at the Falmouth and Freeport polls, describes the experience: "Voters from all walks of life, including hunters, were very willing to sign the petition. In fact, a number of people made a beeline for our table as they were exiting the polls in order to add their names to the list. It was exciting to be involved in this grassroots effort and to interact directly with the voters."

At the press conference held in late January to present 10 boxes of signed petitions to the secretary of state, HSUS board member Anita Coupe spoke about the importance of banning the unethical and unsporting practices of bear baiting, hounding, and trapping, noting, "I am a Mainer and I am The HSUS." Although The HSUS currently has 46,000 members and constituents in Maine, and early support for the campaign has been



Maine voters are urged to go to the polls this November 2 to vote for protection of the state's bears against baiting, hounding, and trapping.

strong, our work is far from over. The Sportsman's Alliance of Maine (SAM), which is leading the charge against the bear referendum, wasted no time in forming its own political action committee known as Maine's Fish and Wildlife Conservation Council. SAM has pledged to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars to fight this measure, and is receiving strong support from political heavyweights such as the National Rifle Association and the trophy hunting organization Safari Club International. We need the support of animal protection advocates in Maine and beyond to overcome the influence of powerful groups that have dominated the debate on this issue. If you would like to support the educational outreach efforts of Maine Citizens for Fair Bear Hunting by making a contribution or volunteering your time, please contact the campaign headquarters at (207) 781-5155 or via e-mail at info@fairbearhunting.org.

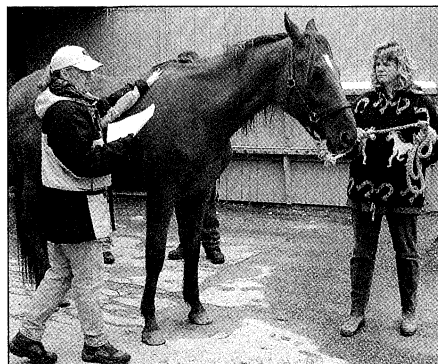
Training “Animal Detectives”

As television shows such as “Animal Cops” and “Animal Precinct” have grown in popularity, the public has become increasingly aware of the important role that animal cruelty investigators play in responding to animal abuse and neglect complaints. But how do you measure animal abuse and neglect? When does a situation merit aggressive action such as the seizure of animals, and when is owner education more appropriate? What differentiates a thin animal from a malnourished or starving one, and how can these differences be proven in court?

Last summer, the Rhode Island Foundation awarded NERO and the Rhode Island SPCA a \$5,000 grant to fund a training seminar on the investigation of animal cruelty. The purpose of the seminar was to familiarize animal control officers with standardized tools developed by veterinary experts to assess the condition of abused or neglected animals. More than 60 animal care and control professionals attended.

The seminar was a boon for all. Through the generosity of the Rhode Island Foundation, we were able to offer a free, high-quality training event to professionals struggling with tight budgets, while also solidifying a strong working relationship with our co-sponsor, the Rhode Island SPCA. Our hope is that this training will support successful animal cruelty investigations and effective intervention throughout the state.

A trainer explains how to assess the body condition of a horse.



HSUS

NERO Staffer Gets Down and Dirty at Wildlife Center

By NERO Program Coordinator Linda Huebner

This past August, I got to do things few people ever experience. I've always had a special place in my heart for wild animals, and studied wildlife policy and human attitudes toward wildlife in graduate school. But that didn't prepare me for the experiences I had while working side-by-side with my colleagues at the HSUS Cape Wildlife Center in West Barnstable, Massachusetts.

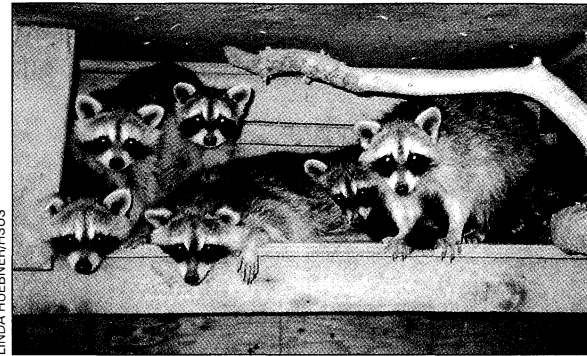
While I was there, I lent a hand in all sorts of fun, interesting, and sometimes messy duties. I fed delicate but insistent orphaned baby birds every 15 minutes, barely finishing before I had to start over again. I cared for cute but rowdy raccoons, fending them off with large buckets while cleaning their pens. I cleaned cages for opossums, gray squirrels, and a variety of bird species. Never in all the time I have spent cleaning up after dogs and cats had I seen anything to prepare me for the messes made by herring gulls! None of my past experiences prepared me for force feeding an underweight frog or medicating a turtle, either. Thank goodness they were cooperative patients!

I don't remember the last time I was so dirty and so tired at the end of a work day, but this hands-on experience, which concluded with rescuing a raccoon who had a peanut butter jar stuck on his head, gave me a better understanding of the daily events in our wildlife rehabilitation center. Many of the injured or orphaned animals find themselves so because of wholly avoidable circumstances—house cat attacks, vehicle accidents, or inhumane or ignorant nuisance wildlife control operators who kill parent animals. I gained a tremendous amount of respect for our staff there and some relevant real-life examples to use when teaching the public how to avoid conflicts with and injuries to wildlife. Sometimes there really is nothing like getting your hands—or your whole body—dirty to appreciate a job.

continued from “Rover,” page 1

Joanne Bourbeau. “Since we were still in hurricane season, and Cape Cod is definitely a high-risk area, the location and timing could not have been better. This practice drill will ensure that animal welfare professionals are prepared for future disasters here in New England.”

While Rover responders had the luxury of going home afterwards, the training came on the heels of real-life Hurricane Isabel, which crippled parts of North Carolina and neighboring states in late September with flooding, high winds, and downed trees and power lines. Bourbeau was activated as part of The HSUS's National Disaster Animal Response Team. Luckily, the animal concerns following



LINDA HUEBNER/HSUS

These raccoons called the HSUS Cape Wildlife Center home until they were ready to be released back to the wild. Here they watch with curiosity while NERO's Linda Huebner cleans their quarters.

the storm were minimal, thanks in large part to the disaster planning animal advocates have been involved with since 1999's Hurricane Floyd left thousands of North Carolina residents and their pets stranded.



LAURA BEVAN/HSUS

NERO Director Joanne Bourbeau (second from right) prepares for the day's assignment during Hurricane Isabel.

VT Cruelty Web Site Launches

As a member of the Vermont Animal Cruelty Task Force, NERO has spent nearly three years helping to build relationships and garner resources for the state's animal welfare community. In January, we proudly launched their animal cruelty Web site, www.vactf.org, as one of several efforts to make animal cruelty investigations more of a community effort.

The site is filled with useful information for both humane agents and private citizens about how to recognize, report, and rectify animal cruelty. It features an electronic version of the 200+ page training and resource manual, “How to Investigate Animal Cruelty in Vermont,” which NERO produced with funding from The HSUS, the Vermont Humane Federation, and the Vermont Sheriffs' Association. The site allows visitors to easily navigate the manual and the state's animal cruelty laws, along with sample investigation forms, fact sheets, and articles about a variety of animal welfare topics.

NERO also coordinated and presented a workshop on conducting cruelty investigations this past fall, which nearly 50 humane agents, law enforcement officers, and municipal officials from throughout Vermont eagerly attended. In addition, we're building support for a statewide response network of professionals in the law enforce-

ment, veterinary, social service, and animal care fields who will stand ready to assist with complaints when local resources are lacking.

“It's very exciting to see our ideas and hard work finally come to fruition,” says NERO Director Joanne Bourbeau. “My hope is that this Web site and the other resources we have developed will be useful tools for both professionals and the public, and will mean improvements for animals throughout the state. I'm a firm believer that the adage ‘it takes a village’ can be applied to caring for animals as well as caring for children in a community.”

USDA Joins NERO Against Fighting

Eliminating illegal animal fighting has been high on NERO's list of priorities for several years. State animal fighting coalitions now regularly meet in Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island, thanks to our leadership. Recently, NERO was pleased to welcome representatives from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Office of Inspector General, which has offered investigative expertise and financial support for active cases throughout the region. This was a direct result of an \$800,000 appropriation the USDA recently received from Congress that The HSUS helped secure.

Each coalition has drawn from a number of stakeholders, including animal control and law enforcement officers, prosecutors, veterinarians, and shelter employees. But the particular



JOHN WINTERBURN

NERO Regional Director Joanne Bourbeau (right) poses with members of the New Hampshire Animal Fighting Task Force at a recent meeting.

needs of the state and the interests of the participants have defined their projects. The Connecticut Animal Fighting Coalition has emphasized informal networking and information sharing among animal control officers, for example, while New Hampshire has focused on public education through the development of a brochure and Web site. In Rhode Island, the recently enacted breed ban in Pawtucket, which was prompted by concerns about dog bites and attacks, has mobilized coalition participants to consider ways to promote responsible pit bull ownership. Maine will face its own challenges in terms of the state's size, but this makes the need for collaboration and communication all the more pressing.

Coalition building can be a slow process, but we are confident that our efforts will pay off in combating animal fighting throughout New England.

I want to learn how I can help our animal friends and The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS).

Please send me information about

- ☐ Making a memorial donation to honor the life of a pet, friend, or relative.
- ☐ Providing for my pets in my will and in case of emergency.
- ☐ Planning my estate and will to help animals and The HSUS.

- ☐ Using charitable gift annuities and trusts to support The HSUS.
- ☐ Giving The HSUS a gift of stock.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

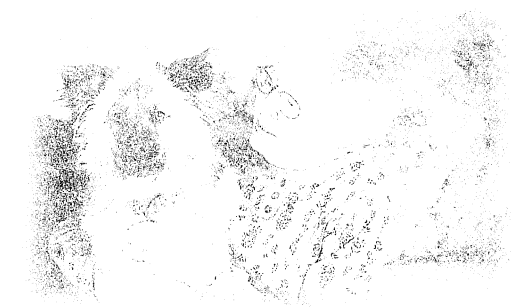
CITY _____

STATE _____

ZIP _____

DAYTIME PHONE _____

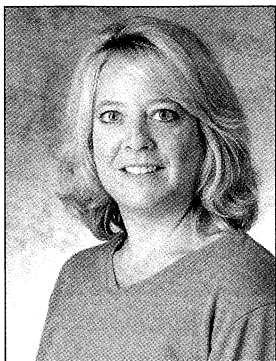
E-MAIL (OPTIONAL) _____



Promoting the protection of all animals

THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES.
NEW ENGLAND REGIONAL OFFICE
Route 112
P.O. Box 619 (mailing address)
Jacksonville, VT 05342-0619

Director's Report



By Joanne Bourbeau
*Director of the New England
Regional Office*

Milestones and Memories

Milestones are always good opportunities for reflection. This year The HSUS celebrates 50 years of protecting animals, and I can't think of a better opportunity to reflect upon the history and accomplishments of the New England Regional Office.

The HSUS's roots here in New England are deep and strong. A program to organize and open a self-supporting branch in every state was started in October 1957. Branches would help local humane societies with their problems and spread HSUS influence. One of the first branches was incorporated in Connecticut. In the early 1970s, then-president John Hoyt conceived the idea of creating regional offices to cover several states. The New England Regional Office was among the first seven regional offices, which together covered 36 states. Today, our 10 regional offices and headquarters cover animal protection issues in all 50 states.

Rear Adm. James Shaw, executive director of the HSUS Connecticut branch, became New England's first regional director. One of his first orders of business was to build our

headquarters on a property in East Haddam, Connecticut, donated by actress and philanthropist Norma Terris. The Humane Education and Nature Center included a research library, museum, and meeting hall. During this period, The HSUS began to explore with the University of Tulsa the development of humane education materials. The Society entered into a contract with the University, and the National Association for the Advancement of Humane Education (now the National Association for Humane and Environmental Education or NAHEE) was born. NERO and NAHEE shared space in the center until the regional office was relocated to Jacksonville, Vermont, in October 1993, when Rev. George and Mrs. June Butler presented a gift of land.

The promotion of humane education was a fundamental focus of HSUS programming from the founding of the organization. Regional office staff actively promoted and conducted education programs with the hope of stemming the growing estrangement between humans and animals in our increasingly urbanized society. For nearly 40 years, our office has been awarding the Shaw-Worth Memorial Scholarship to a high school student who demonstrates strong animal advocacy and a deep respect for people, animals, and the environment. Other regional programs focused on many of the same issues we tackle today—ending cruel hunting practices, helping the animal victims of abuse and neglect, and engineering legislative reform.

On our 25th anniversary, John Hoyt shared his vision for the future with our membership at the 1979 annual conference. "The future for organizations such as The HSUS appears to be hopeful. Success lies with those whose understanding of animal welfare does not begin or end with their own pet, nor in the rescuing or preserving of any one particular creature or species, but who



Humane education has been a hallmark of the New England region since the 1950s. Here former HSUS President John Hoyt meets a student.

embrace the whole of animal creation as deserving of an advocate for their ultimate well-being and care. It lies with those who understand that no crusade for right and justice comes easily, but requires a commitment to do battle in the political and social arenas of life where those decisions that sustain or destroy life are finally resolved."

Amazingly, our New England constituency is close to 500,000 today, and our national constituency tops 8 million. The HSUS is not just an organization. It is a collection of like-minded individuals who share our vision of a world in which people satisfy the needs of domestic animals, protect wild animals and their environment, and change their relationships with other animals from exploitation and harm to respect and compassion. The anniversary of our continuing journey to achieve this goal together is truly a cause for celebration.

The *NERO Regional News* is a publication of The Humane Society of the United States, New England Regional Office, P.O. Box 619, Jacksonville, VT 05342-0619; 802-368-2790. Joanne Bourbeau, director. The office is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and is closed on federal holidays.

© 2004 by The Humane Society of the United States. All rights reserved. A COPY OF THE LATEST REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION FILED BY THE HSUS MAY BE OBTAINED BY CONTACTING THE HSUS, OFFICE OF THE TREASURER, 2100 L ST., NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20037, 202-452-1100. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT.

Printed on recycled paper.

Contacting HSUS

Write:

HSUS New England Regional Office
P.O. Box 619
Jacksonville, VT 05342-0619

Fax:

802-368-2756

Call:

802-368-2790

Web Page:

www.hsus.org/nero

Promoting the protection of all animals